

The present invention relates generally to improvements for electrically operated consumer products, the improvements more particularly contributing to facilitating the preparation of these products for their intended end use.

Example of the Prior Art

Exemplified perhaps best by hair care appliances, such as hair dryers and hair curlers, is their management using an "Appliance Organizer" as illustrated and described in patent 5,917,694 issued to Denny on June 29, 1999, as but one of many such patents. Using to advantage that the appliances are typically used at a common site, such as before a bathroom sink and mirror, there is positioned at the site a holder of the appliances which also organizes the electrical cords thereof so there is minimal entanglement.

However, equally popular are such consumer products also electrically operated, as exemplified by digital cameras, cell phones, walkie-talkies, MP3 players and like products, which are battery-powered to promote portability. These category of products lacking a common site of use, correspondingly lack an organizer, not only to obviate electric cord entanglement but to safeguard against hazards during preparation for use.

Broadly, it is an object of the present invention to overcome the foregoing and other shortcomings of the prior art.

More particularly, it is an object to use to advantage an equivalent of a common site of use, namely, a makeshift common site for the charging of the batteries of the noted portable consumer products, and to thereby obtain the same benefits of an "organizer", all as will be better understood as the description proceeds.

The description of the invention which follows, together with the accompanying drawings should not be construed as limiting the invention to the example shown and described, because those skilled in the art to which this invention appertains will be able to devise other forms thereof within the ambit of the appended claims.

Fig. 1 is a perspective view, with portions broken away to illustrate internal structural features, of an organizer for electrical cords of electrically-operated consumer products according to the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a partial front elevational view of a spaced apart string of female electrical sockets component to the organizer;

Fig. 3 is a view similar to Fig. 2 and including electrical cords of electrically-operated consumer products.

Fig. 4 is a perspective view of the organizer similar to Fig. 1 but without the portion thereof broken away in Fig. 1; and

Fig. 5 is a partial perspective view illustrating the electrical cords of Fig. 3 and also the electrically-operated consumer products.

In popular use are electrically operated articles of manufacture, as shown in Fig. 1, exemplified by digital cameras, cell phones, walkie-talkies, MP3 players and like products, individually and collectively designated 10, which have as an auxiliary component an electric cord 12 typically 3 to 5 feet in length 14 and having a male plug 16 at one end and a charging insert 18 at an opposite end, the latter sized and shaped to be projected into a cooperating sized and shaped socket 20 in the product 10 so that batteries or like electrical components (not shown) of the product 10 are charged with electrical energy preparatory to functioning in the manner intended, as for

example, a charged digital camera product 10 to provide photographing service, a charged cell phone product 10 to provide communicating service, and so on.

Addressing the chore of charging the products 10 from time to time, as needed, is an article of manufacture of what aptly, going by its function, serves as an organizer illustrated and generally designated 22 in Fig. 1, provided in accordance with the present invention to handle the plural electrical cords 12 without entanglement with each other, in proper electrical connection, with a cooperating product 10, and in a typically unsupervised set aside duration for the charging in a safeguarded environment against injury to children, pets or those otherwise vulnerable by exposure to the electrical connections involved, as well as obviating the hazards of fire of flammable materials.

The safe environment of the organizer 22 is provide by an interior compartment 24 bounded by a bottom 26, a short front wall 28, a taller rear wall 30, opposite side walls 32 and 34 of a trapezoidal shape presenting angled edges 36 and 38, and a top wall 40, the edges, individually and collectively designated 42, of the walls bounding an opening 44 into the compartment 24. Mounted on the rear wall 30 is a horizontally oriented power strip 46 of uniformly spaced apart female electrical sockets, individually and collectively designated 48, of a type commercially available, as from The Home Depot of 1608 Sunrise Highway, Freeport, New York, and including an electrical cord 50 electrically connected at one end to the sockets 48 and at an opposite end to a male plug 52.

In correlation to the uniform spacing of the female sockets 48 is an array of similarly uniformly spaced apart edges bounding shaped openings, individually and collectively designated 54, in the top wall 40, so that the correlation produces an alignment of a cooperating opening 54

with a female socket 48 in plural vertical planes successively across the width 56 of the wall 40, as shown in Fig. 2.

As best seen in Fig. 3, the use of the organizer 22 contemplates the threading of the male plug 16 of an electrical cord 12 through a selected opening 54 and the electrical connection of the male plug 16 to a cooperating, or same vertical plane, female plug 48 on the strip 46. The charging means ends 18 of the electrical cord 12 is then inserted in a force fit in the opening 54, as noted at 58 and, to this end since the charging means end 18 is usually shaped and of a selected size as supplied by manufacturers thereof, the openings 54 are of a matching shape and size to provide the noted friction fit 58. The trade practice of sizing and shaping the electric cord charging means end 18 as just noted is best understood from Patent 6,495,988 for "Combination Charging Mechanism" incorporated herein pursuant to MPEP 2163.07(b)

Completing the construction of the organizer 22 is a cover or lid 60 hingedly connected, as at 62, to the free edge 66 of the top wall 40 so as to partake of opening and closing movements 68 in the compartment opening 44, as shown in Fig. 4. When closed, lid 60 is an angled support surface for products 10 held in place against a stop in a strip 70 connected horizontally across the lid 60, best seen in Fig. 5.

Preparatory to a charging interval, typically at night, with the power strip male plug 52 inserted in a power company line current female wall socket, as seen in Fig. 5, one or more products 10 are disposed in place on the closed slanted lid 60 and cooperating cord electrical charging ends 18 removed from the openings 54 and connected to the products 10, with the lengths 14 of the cords 12 each maintained in a neat coiled and untangled condition from each other in their delimited vertical planes within the storage compartment 24. The electrical charging ends 18 not in active use remain in their non-use positions in the openings 54 and, as such, pose no more of a

danger than an unused wall female socket, while the active female sockets 48 of the power strip 46 are within the safeguard of the compartment 24.

While the organizer herein shown and disclosed in detail is fully capable of attaining the objects and providing the advantages hereinbefore stated, it is to be understood that it is merely illustrative of the presently preferred embodiment of the invention and that no limitations are intended to the detail of construction or design herein shown other than as defined in the appended claims.